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NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

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Head Table

Admiral Turner

Mrs. Turner

[REDACTED] Deputy to the DCI for Resource Management

[REDACTED] - Deputy to the DCI for Collection Tasking

Robert R. Bowie - Deputy to the DCI for National Intelligence

Herbert E. Hetu - Director of Public Affairs

Frank Aukofer - President of the National Press Club

William Webster - Director of the FBI

James Woolsey - Under Secretary of the Navy

Ed Prina - Bureau Chief, Copley Newspapers

James Canan - Business Week

Vivian Vahlberg - Daily Oklahoman
Chairperson, National Press Club Professional
Relations Committee

Jack Landau - Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

Norman Kempster - L.A. Times

Reception

Admiral and Mrs. Turner

Mrs. Turner Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bowie (Teddy)

Mr. John Blake

Mr. John Waller

Mr. Herbert Hetu

Cdr. Charles Battaglia

Capt. George Thibault

Col. Keeley

Mr. Robert Williams

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Address by Admiral Stansfield Turner
Director of Central Intelligence
National Press Club
Washington, D.C.
Wednesday, 25 October 1978

PROTECTING SECRETS IN A FREE SOCIETY

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PROTECTING SECRETS IN A FREE SOCIETY

In the nineteen months that I have been Director of Central Intelligence, I have come into the habit of screening the press clips first thing every morning. I almost hold my breath until I know if today's disclosures include some of our sensitive sources of intelligence. Sometimes it comes out through a leak, sometimes from the forced testimony of one of our officers in court and sometimes from the subpoena of a document or notes. As a result, I have almost come to think of you in the media and we in intelligence as being adversaries. In recent months, however, I find that we are really in the same plight together. As often as not, the press clips disclose that it is you, the media who are being taken into court and forced to defend the secrecy of your sources or it is you who are receiving the subpoenas. At least if I understand it, the essence of the court cases involving Mr. Farber, the Stanford Daily and others is whether preserving the confidentiality of a newsman's sources is essential to meeting his obligations and to the continued success of your profession.

Let me assure you that if this is anything of a problem to you, the danger of disclosing sources is the number one threat to our American intelligence community today. The focus of the media with respect to intelligence for almost four years now has been on actual and alleged abuses of the past. I sincerely believe the threat to our country of excesses in intelligence operations is far less today than any time in our history. The real danger is that we will be unable to conduct necessary operations because of the risk that they would be disclosed. Let me give you some examples of why I say this.

First, allied intelligence services are losing confidence that we can keep a secret. We suspect that some are holding back information. One recently withdrew a proposal for a joint covert action which would have been beneficial to both nations. It did so when reminded that I must notify eight committees of the Congress of every covert action. They could not imagine that the plan would not leak.

Beyond this, agents overseas who risk their lives to support our country even though they are not even citizens of it ask, "When will my name appear in your press?" This is not a transient problem; it is a trend that could undermine our human intelligence capabilities for a decade or

more. In this kind of a climate there simply may be fewer volunteers to be sources for us in the future.

Finally, with respect to the dangers of a lack of secrecy too many leaks can lead to intelligence by timidity. A timid reporter will never land the big story. A timid intelligence officer will not take the risks which are a part of his work if he must add the high probability that his sources will be exposed in our media. All three of these examples are part of the same fundamental question of question of protection of sources, and are not at all different from the problem which you face.

I do not know what your profession is doing about this problem we have in common. I would like to describe our response thus far. First, we recognize that a lot of the problem is right on our own doorstep. Sometimes it is our own people who provide the leaks. Sometimes it is former employees. Sometimes we are vulnerable to deliberate espionage. Accordingly, we can and are tightening our internal security procedures. You can always tighten up, but it is a matter of compromise between having such tight controls that we cannot do our job with reasonable efficiency and striving so much for efficiency that we do not properly control our secrets. The tables today are perhaps tilted a bit too much in the direction of

efficiency. I am working to turn them back and I hope that will make it more difficult for you to obtain our secrets.

We are also doing things externally. We have a policy of greater openness. My presence here is evidence of my personal commitment to keep the public better informed by being more open about intelligence activities where and when that is possible. How will openness help us preserve secrets? Well, simply by reducing the excessive corpus of secrets that now exists within our government. Today so much information is unnecessarily classified that we have lost respect for the classified label. By making as much as possible available to the public, we reduce the amount that is kept secret. In turn this makes it easier to engender respect for that which remains classified.

It takes more than openness, however, to preserve secrets. Basically there must be some renewed acknowledgment in the media and in the public that secrecy is legitimate. Clearly there is a very fine line which we must tread. Too much secrecy can impede justice or staunch the flow of information within our society. Too little secrecy can give away data that is of vital importance to our nation. It is a delicate balance between a government that serves

its people poorly because it does not keep them informed and one that serves them poorly because it does not maintain necessary secrets. No government, no business, no newspaper, no private individual can conduct his life or business without some element of secrecy. Newsmen feel that the release of their notes even to prosecute a charge of murder would endanger an obligation to individuals who help them and would set a precedent adversely affecting the future of their profession. So, too, do we in the field of intelligence react almost daily. But, there is one difference between our attitudes and obligations. Your case rests upon an interpretation of the Constitution which today is being seriously challenged. My obligation rests upon a law--the National Security Act of 1947 which requires that the Director of Central Intelligence in his person "shall be responsible for protecting our sources and methods of collecting intelligence from unauthorized disclosure." I must comply to the best of my ability and conscience.

Still another difference in your perspective and mine is that protecting sources is only one of my problems of secrecy. It has become very suspect these days to even refer to withholding information in the name of national security. Abuse of this principle

in the past, however, does not make it invalid today. Quite simply, there is information which it is not in the national interest to disclose. We cannot negotiate a SALT treaty if we cannot maintain the privacy of our negotiating position. We cannot afford to develop expensive weapons systems or devices for collecting intelligence and then tell those against whom we might have to employ them what their precise characteristics are.

Because, however, we in the world of intelligence are in the risk-taking business, and because there are dangers to our national fabric from the improper use of the intelligence process, clearly there must be special checks on us. I believe that there are such checks today and that the public can be more confident today than ever before that the abuses of the past will not reoccur. Out of the crucible of the past four years of public criticism, a whole new regimen of controls and checks has been constructed. These begin with the policy of greater openness that I have cited to you.

Beyond this, we have established a thorough system of control mechanisms to govern our day-by-day activities. These start with two basic guidelines which are the framework within which all intelligence professionals now work. The first of these is that espionage must be considered an extraordinary remedy. Clandestine means

of gathering information should never be utilized when the same information might be available openly. The second guideline is that actions which we take in secret must be defensible, in principle, in public. Clearly, we cannot lay out publicly all the details of each instance of espionage which we undertake, but we can in public defend the general classes of actions we utilize.

Beyond these guidelines, we have also established a series of prohibitions. Some activities, such as assassination, are so repugnant to our national standards as to warrant prohibition without exception. In some cases, however, total prohibition is a bit too rigid a position. Instead, we have injunctions which generally prohibit certain activities unless there is a specific authorization for them. This is analogous to law enforcement procedures in common use in our country. We all recognize that there is an injunction against a law enforcement agency invading the privacy of our homes, except with the specific authorization of a search warrant. We too, in intelligence are establishing similar procedures, sometimes with warrants, sometimes with other provisions for approval. The utilization of members of the US media for intelligence purposes is one example. This is proscribed unless I personally make the exception.

The most significant change in American intelligence in recent years, however, and one that is truly revolutionary is the introduction of effective external oversight from both the executive and legislative branches. This oversight is intended to check on how the guidelines, prohibitions and injunctions are being carried out, and to relate the nature of our intelligence activities to the attitudes and mores of the country as a whole.

An Intelligence Oversight Board has been functioning for almost three years. Composed of three members from outside the government, presently former Senator Gore, former Governor Scranton, and Mr. Thomas Farmer, it reviews Intelligence Community activities and serves as a place where anyone can report activities they suspect may be illegal or improper. The Board reports its findings directly to the President.

Oversight committees have been in place in Congress for two years in the case of the Senate, and a little over one year in the House. In both instances the relationship between the Select Committees on Intelligence and the Intelligence Community has been one of cooperation and help, but at the same time definitely one of oversight and supervision. There is no question that we are answerable to these committees.

Many in the Intelligence Community have come to recognize the positive values for us in the oversight process. Ultimate accountability is essential to responsible action. When the stakes are high, when patriotism^{is} a driving force and when risks must be taken, it is good to have the element of accountability hanging over us. Oversight is forcing us to be judicious, to think out both the risks and benefits of what we propose to do.

The Congressional Oversight Committees are now in the process of legislating guidelines, prohibitions, and injunctions and further refining the oversight procedures themselves in what will be known as Charters for the Intelligence Community. I strongly support this undertaking. In the first place it will provide the legal foundation for our activities. In the second place, it will provide guidance so that the US intelligence officer on the street in a foreign country and those of us in the headquarters will have a better idea of what is expected, what may not be done and what, if done, must be justified convincingly to our overseers.

On top of all these governmental checks and controls, we also, of course, view you, the media, as another important

oversight mechanism in reassuring the public and in preventing abuse. My plea to you, however, is to recognize the similarity of our plights. We in intelligence are professionals dedicated to secrecy who are constantly having to defend ourselves against being pressed into excessive openness. You are professionals dedicated to openness who are now facing great pressures to dispense with your secrets. I hope that you will recognize that when we balk, for instance, at disclosing all the secrets necessary to prosecute a case in court, we do not do so in an arbitrary manner. We study these cases very carefully. Moreover, we must be prepared to justify our positions not only to the Attorney General but to our oversight committees. Yet, it is right for you to question these judgments, but please bear in mind that your oversight is frequently hampered by only having part of the picture. You are at a severe disadvantage compared with our Intelligence Oversight Board and our Congressional committees since we cannot share our secrets with you. This, indeed, places you in a difficult position. With data that is incomplete, you must be concerned about misleading the public or making disclosures injurious to the national interest. You must constantly balance those dangers with your obligation to keep Americans well informed and to uncover malfeasance in government where it exists.

Another area of delicate responsibility for you is in judging the validity of so-called "whistleblowers" who come to you with tales of impropriety or inefficiency. Many of these appear to have only the most altruistic motives, and probably bring reassurances that what they are disclosing is not justifiably secret. Let me suggest that what is legitimately secret or sensitive is not always obvious on its face, especially to former officials who were third or fourth echelon at best and who were never in a position to assess all of the equities involved. The potential in these situations for abuse of you and your role is immense. What better way to promote a forthcoming book than to titillate the public through encouraging you to issue samples of unauthorized revelations. How many so-called "whistleblowers" go through the oversight mechanisms that I have described where abuses and undue secrecy can be questioned without compromising legitimate secrets? Frankly, I have yet to see a whistleblower use these relief valves fully before going to the court of last resort--you, the public press. I am suspicious as to their motivation and suggest that you might well be also. Further, when every elected or appointed public official is suspect and every

renegade whistleblower is automatically accepted as a hero; when there is greater emphasis on criticizing and tearing down our society than on building it up, I suggest that we are heading for real trouble.

I do not envy you the difficult job of conducting oversight and assessing the validity of your sources without access to all of the information you need; or of making the choices which you face in steering a course between the Scylla of undue emphasis on criticism and the Charybdis of taking too much on face value; or of deciding whether the national interest is better served by printing a secret or by withholding it.

I do not, however, accept the thesis sometimes proffered that your responsibilities leave you no choice but to print whatever you receive; or that the possibility that someone else will print it anyway makes the question moot. Nor do I agree that if you possess some information it can be assumed that the KGB or other foreign intelligence services have it too. But, in the end, those of us in government who are involved in protecting secrets are not the ones to pass judgment on the actual choices you make. It is the public who should and will.

The recent court decisions on Farber and such may indicate that neither the public nor the courts agree with some of the premises under which you have traditionally labored. Your unfettered right to print and disclose is clearly being questioned; just as has our indiscriminate right to classify. Accordingly, we both, it seems to me are in the midst of a reassessment of our roles and the way we carry them out.

The Intelligence Community has been about this task for several years now. I suggest that there is something to be learned from our experience. I would not suggest how you ought to resolve these issues as they affect your ability to play your role. From my point of view, ~~th~~rough, as this country's chief intelligence officer, what I expect from the nation's media is a greater understanding of the commonality of our problem of protecting sources; less suspicion and reliance on inferences and more quest for facts, especially about alleged improprieties; fewer headlines about intelligence abuses of 25 years ago played as though they were new revelations and more concern for today; and more discretion as to what is relevant to our society's needs and what is pure sensation. Yet I again acknowledge that it is by no means easy for you to strike these balances precisely when you have only partial information. In the final analysis we both serve the same master and will be

judged by the same jury--the public of the United States. Within the framework of our uneasy relationship, I believe there is room for mutual respect and for us to work closer together rather than farther apart. A greater degree of communication and perhaps even trust will benefit us both and will permit us jointly to serve that American people more effectively.

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DRAFT

Admiral Turner's Remarks to the
National Press Club
25 October 1978

Thank you very much Frank. Ladies and gentlemen. I always regret when somebody like Frank seems generous in introducing me, it discloses the fact that I got my present assignment strictly on merit of my abilities, not because I was a classmate of the President of the United States.

In the 19 months since the President appointed me as Director of Central Intelligence, I have fallen into a daily habit of starting my day by reading your press clippings. I do so almost holding my breath however, waiting to see what new disclosure is going to uncover one or another of our intelligence sources. Sometimes it's a simple leak, sometimes it's one of our officers who had to testify in a court, sometimes it's a subpoena for one of our documents or some of our notes. As a result, unfortunately, with this kind of a start for my day, I almost come to look on you people as our adversaries. That is at least until recently when I began to perceive that in reading the press, it was almost as likely to be you who were being called into court to defend your rights to secrecy. Or it was you who were being served these subpoenas for your notes or your documents. Why this morning look at the Washington Post, in this column there's the story of the problem I have today with disclosing documents for the prosecution of ITT; in this column there's the story of the problem you had yesterday with disclosing the notes of Mr. Farber in the prosecution he was involved

in. I can say to you--welcome to the club, I'm glad to share this problem with you. At least if I understand the essence of the problem of the court cases of Farber and Stanford Daily and others have raised, it's whether preserving the confidentiality of a newsman's sources is essential for him to fulfill his obligations and to continue the success of his profession. Now if this is a problem for you, let me assure you that the problem of keeping secrets, of being able to preserve the anonymity of our sources is the number one problem of your United States Intelligence Community today. The focus of the media with respect to intelligence for almost four years now has been almost exclusively on the abuses of the past. I can assure you that, in my opinion, the probability of the excesses of intelligence today is less than it has ever been in our history. If there is a threat or a danger today, it is our inability to carry out necessary intelligence operations because of the threat of disclosure. Let me give you a few examples of why I say this.

First, allied intelligence services are very nervous about whether we can keep secrets. I suspect that some of them are withholding information from us. I know that just recently a foreign intelligence service declined a joint covert action with us that would have been of great benefit to both countries. It did so when reminded that I must notify eight committees of the Congress of any covert action. They simply did not believe we could keep that a secret.

Beyond that, agents who work for us for the good of our country, even though they are not citizens of it, are beginning to ask, "When

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will my name appear in your press?" This is not a transient, short-term problem; it is one that could have an impact on our intelligence capabilities for a decade or more. In this kind of a climate, you simply don't get people to volunteer to be agents for the United States.

Finally, with respect to this question of the dangers of leaks on our operations, let me point out that there is a danger that too many leaks will lead to intelligence by timidity. The timid reporter never gets the big story. The timid intelligence operative does not take those risks which must be taken if he's to do his job especially if he, in his conscious, fears that the sources he is working with are ultimately going to be disclosed.

Now all three of these examples are part of the same fundamental problem of preserving sources and their confidentiality, a problem which you face as well as we. I don't know what your profession is doing today to confront this problem and to change the ways in which you do business, but I would like to describe to you some of the things that we are doing. First of all, we recognize that much of the problem lies on our own doorstep. It is sometimes our own people who leak, or our former employees. And it is our responsibility to defend ourselves against deliberate espionage. And so, today, we are tightening our security procedures. This is always difficult. You can tighten security procedures at any time, but you can tighten them so much that you can't get your job done. On the other hand, you can be so interested in efficiency that you don't protect what needs to be protected. Today, I believe the tables have tilted just a bit too much on the side of

and, in the process, I sincerely hope I'm going to make it much more difficult for you to get our secrets.

We are also doing things externally. We have the policy that Frank referred to of greater openness. Being here with you today is an indication of my commitment to keep the American public as well informed about intelligence activities as we possibly can. How does openness help us preserve secrets? Well one of the greatest problems of maintaining secrecy today is that there is too much information that is classified, there is a lack of respect for the classified label simply because there is too much of it. And so by reducing that corpus of classified information through releasing to the public what we can, I hope to engender greater respect for that which must remain secret.

It takes more than openness, however, to preserve secrecy. Basically there must, in my view, be a renewed acknowledgement both with you in the media and the public in general, of the legitimacy of having secrets. Now this is a very fine line as we all know--a fine line between so much secrecy that you impede justice and you staunch the free flow of information in our open society. Or, on the other hand, releasing so much that you endanger vital national interest. There must be some balance between the government that serves its people poorly because it does not keep them well informed and the government that serves its people poorly because it discloses things that must not be disclosed. No government, no business, no newspaper, no individual can afford to live in total

openness. Newsmen feel that the release of their notes, even in the charge of murder, would set a precedent and would endanger obligations that they had undertaken. So too do we in the field of intelligence face this kind of difficult decision on a daily basis. There is one difference, however, in how we confront these obligations. Your case for maintaining the privacy of your sources rests on your interpretation of the Constitution, an interpretation that is being challenged today. My case rests on the law--the National Security Act of 1947 which expressly charges the person of the Director of Central Intelligence with being responsible for protecting our sources and methods of collecting intelligence from unauthorized disclosure. I simply must comply with this law to the best of my ability and conscience.

There is still one other difference between my problem of secrecy and yours and this is that protecting sources is only one part of my problem. Now it has become quite out of vogue to talk about withholding information in the name of national security. But because that principle has been abused in the past, it is no less valid today. Quite simply, there is information which it is not in the national interest to disclose. We cannot negotiate a SALT Treaty if our positions are known in advance. We cannot afford, as a country, to develop expensive weapons systems or devices for collecting intelligence and then reveal their precise details to others.

Because, however, we in the world of intelligence are in the risk-taking business, and because there is a genuine potential for abuse in the procedures we must apply, it is important that there be special

checks on us and our procedures. I believe today that we have those checks and that they give the American public a greater assurance than ever before against any reoccurrence of abuse. Out of the crucible of the last almost four years of intense public criticism, we have forged a series of controls and oversight procedures that give us that assurance. To begin with there is the policy of greater openness which I have cited to you.

Beyond this, we have a series of mechanisms to check on our day-to-day procedures. First there are general guidelines which provide the framework under which all intelligence officers now operate. The first general guideline is that espionage must be regarded as an extraordinary activity. We must not, by spying, try to obtain information that can be found and made available to open sources. The second guideline is that we must be able, in principle, to defend in public that which we do in secret. Clearly we cannot disclose all the details of particular espionage activities. But we can explain that the types of activities we undertake are, in fact, in the national interest and in conformity with the attitudes and policies of our country.

Now beyond these guidelines we also have established a number of prohibitions. There are some activities, such as assassinations, which are so repugnant to our national standards that we can flatly prohibit them. In many cases, however, a total prohibition is being too rigid and in these cases we have what we call injunctions--a general prohibition against undertaking such activity but with specific exceptions. This is a commonly accepted procedure with law enforcement in our

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country. No one would expect Judge Webster of the FBI to search his home unless there was a judicial warrant issued making a special exception. Similarly we now have established such procedures and checks; some of them involving warrants, some of them not. For instance, there is a prohibition on using members of the American media as intelligence operatives unless I, personally, make the exception.

Now the most significant change, and one that is truly revolutionary in our intelligence procedures today, is the effective establishment of external oversight from both the Executive and the Legislative Branches. This oversight is intended to check on how well the guidelines, the prohibitions, injunctions are being followed. It also is intended to ensure that the overall tone of our intelligence activities is in line with the attitudes and mores of our country.

There is an Intelligence Oversight Board which has been in existence for a little over three years. This Board consists of three men from outside the Government--former Senator Gore, former Governor Scranton, Mr. Thomas Farmer of this city. Their only responsibility is to look into the legality and the propriety of our intelligence activities. Anyone may report what they think are abuses to them. The committee investigates and reports only to the President.

Beyond this we now have committees of the Congress--one in the Senate for over two years and one in the House for little over a year, dedicated exclusively to intelligence oversight. The relationship between these Select Committees and the Intelligence Community is one of cooperation

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and helpfulness. But at the same time, there is no question that it is a relationship of check and balance, of supervision and investigation. There is no question that we are accountable to these committees. And in this short time that the Committees have been in existence, many in the Intelligence Community have come to recognize the positive values of Congressional oversight for us. Ultimate accountability is essential to responsible actions. When the stakes are high, when the risks are great, and when there is a spirit of patriotism involved, you need to have accountability to make your judicious selection of what you need to do. That's what I think is happening through this intelligence oversight process. We are looking not only at the benefits, we're looking carefully at the risks of our intelligence programs.

The Intelligence Committees of the Congress are today engaged in developing new legislation. Legislation which will codify the guidelines, the prohibitions, injunctions, and these general oversight procedures. I strongly support this activity and these proposed Charters as they will be called for our Intelligence Community. I support them first because they will provide the legal foundation behind what we do. Secondly, it will provide to the intelligence operator in the field and to us in headquarters an idea of what the scope of our activities can and should be, what we are permitted and not permitted to do, and what types of activities will be closely overseen by our various committees.

Now on top of all these governmental controls and checks, we also count on you, the media, as a oversight mechanism. A mechanism for helping to reassure the public and to prevent abuses. My plea to you

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today, however, is to recognize the similarity of our plights. We in intelligence are professionals dedicated to secrecy and constantly having to fend off demands for excessive openness. You are professionals dedicated to openness and now constantly having to fend off demands to release your few secrets. I hope that you will recognize that when we balk, for instance, at turning over documents necessary for prosecution in the courts, we do not do so in an arbitrary manner. We think these issues out very carefully and we are most aware that we must not only justify our position to the Attorney General, but perhaps ultimately to our oversight committees. Nonetheless, it is right for you to question the judgments we make in these instances. But I would hope that you would recognize in passing such judgment that you are at the severe disadvantage of having only part of the story. You do not have the advantages of the Oversight Board and the Select Committees of access to our secrets or, at least, I hope not. This places you indeed in a difficult position. You have to be concerned that whether you may, with incomplete information, be misleading the public or releasing material that is injurious to our country. On the other hand, you surely have the obligation to keep our country informed and to check on malfeasance in the government.

You also have a delicate responsibility in judging the validity of the so-called "whistleblowers" who frequently come to you with charges of impropriety or inefficiency. Many of these people appear to have altruistic motives and, I am sure, reassure you that what they are releasing is not truly sensitive or secret. Parenthetically I might add

that it is a very delicate matter to determine what really is sensitive or secret, and not likely to be one that somebody who was at best only third or fourth echelon and didn't have the view from which he could assess the entire equities, is likely to be a good judge. But the potential in these situations for abuse, for abuse of you and of your role in our society is very great. What better way to promote your new book than to persuade the media to start titillating the public by publishing excerpts of unauthorized revelations from it. I would suggest that it is the rare "whistleblower" who resorts to the oversight mechanisms I have described to report undue secrecy or improper activities, and report them in a channel where secrets can be kept. Instead, I find none who have done that fully but rather they have turned to the court of last resort, you the public press. This I'm afraid makes me suspicious of their motivations, I suggest it should you also. Further, let me just suggest that when every elected or appointed public official today is automatically suspect and every renegade "whistleblower" is automatically a hero, and when we have more emphasis on criticizing and tearing down our society than on building it up, I think as a nation we are headed for trouble.

Still, I do not envy you the difficult job of conducting the oversight and assessing the validity of "whistleblowers" and other sources without full access to all of the information that you really need. You face very difficult choices in steering a course between the Sycylla of undue criticism and the Charybdis of taking too much on face value; and you're making that difficult choice of whether to the national interest it is better to print a secret of ^R to withhold it.

proffered that your responsibilities are such that you must print everything you learn or the thesis that because someone else is going to print it anyway the question is moot. Or the thesis that if you have the information, surely the KGB or other intelligence services have it also. But let me add, I'm not suggesting that we in government who are responsible for keeping the secrets are the ones to pass judgment on your choices in these matters. It is our public that should and will pass that judgment.

I would suggest that the recent court decisions on Farber and others may well indicate that neither the public nor the courts agreed with some of the premises under which you have traditionally operated. Your unfettered right to print and to disclose is being seriously questioned today as was our unfettered right to classify. Accordingly, as I see the situation, we both are in the midst of a reassessment of where our roles in this society are and how we go about fulfilling them.

I would suggest that we in the Intelligence Community have been about this reassessment for several years now. There is something to be learned, I believe, from that. I would not suggest, however, how you ought to resolve the issues of how you play your role in our society. From my point of view though, as this country's chief intelligence officer, what I expect from the nation's media is a greater understanding of the commonality of our problem of protecting sources. Less suspicion and reliance on inferences rather than fact, especially with

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respect to alleged improprieties; fewer headlines about what happened 25 years ago playing it as though it were yesterday, and more emphasis on our concerns for today and tomorrow, and more discretion of what is truly relevant to our society's needs as opposed to being just sensation. Let me acknowledge again though that I recognize it is by no means easy for you to draw these lines precisely when you have only partial information.

In the final analysis we both serve the same master and will be judged by the same jury, the public of the United States. Within the framework of our uneasy relationship, I believe that there is room for a mutual respect and for us to work closer together rather than farther apart. A greater degree of communication and even trust will benefit both of us and will also permit us to jointly to serve the American people more effectively. I hope we can do that. Thank you.

National Press Club
Questions & Answers

Q: The first question alludes to your records, to keeping secrets in court cases. The most of the federal court cases are stopped yesterday because of secret information. Would like to know what the CIA's policy is on criminal trials that involve national security interests in keeping those secrets maybe with people like ITT executives can't be prosecuted.

A: My policy is that I bear a legal responsibility to advise the Attorney General if the release of documents or testimony necessary for prosecution will, in my opinion, endanger the national interests. Clearly this is a subjective judgment in each opinion and in each case I try to provide my view on how serious the damage would be. I do not claim the privilege of withholding anything from the courts. I claim the privilege only of ensuring that those who make the release have had the opportunity to balance the benefits of prosecution with the benefits, or the detriments rather, of revelations. And I see nothing different in that than in claiming privilege for Mr. Farber's notes in a case of murder trial.

Q: This question relates to classification in which you mentioned overclassification. The questioner would like to know if it is safer for an individual to overclassify rather than to underclassify, to save his own neck, and how important is this problem.

A: Yes, it's safer to overclassify than underclassify. I'll tell you a sea story--a few years ago I had what I thought was a brilliant idea.

I forwarded it through channels for how the Navy could do something of great importance. When I looked at it I said, "You know, that really, really isn't classified." So I sent it forward in unclassified channels. A couple of days later it appeared in the Norfolk newspapers and the next day the Washington newspapers had 17 Congressmen complaining about this horrendous idea, which I believed was great and could have been sold to them if it had come through proper channels. But because I couldn't hold anybody accountable for this unclassified piece, I got burned by underclassifying. But it is a serious problem. The new Presidential directive on classification puts strictures against overclassification. It's something that is endemic, something we have to each work at each day, and it just takes repeated effort and emphasis. As recently as two hours ago I wrote a note to one of my subordinates who had written me and said we shouldn't declassify this, there's not enough pressure on us. I said "That is not policy, the question is is it reasonably declassified without hurting the national interest; if it is, let's go."

Q: We have several questions about wiretapping, somehow I don't expect an answer. There are two--are you now or have you wiretapped any law firms. And how many taps, if any, does the CIA have in operation in news bureaus outside and inside _____.

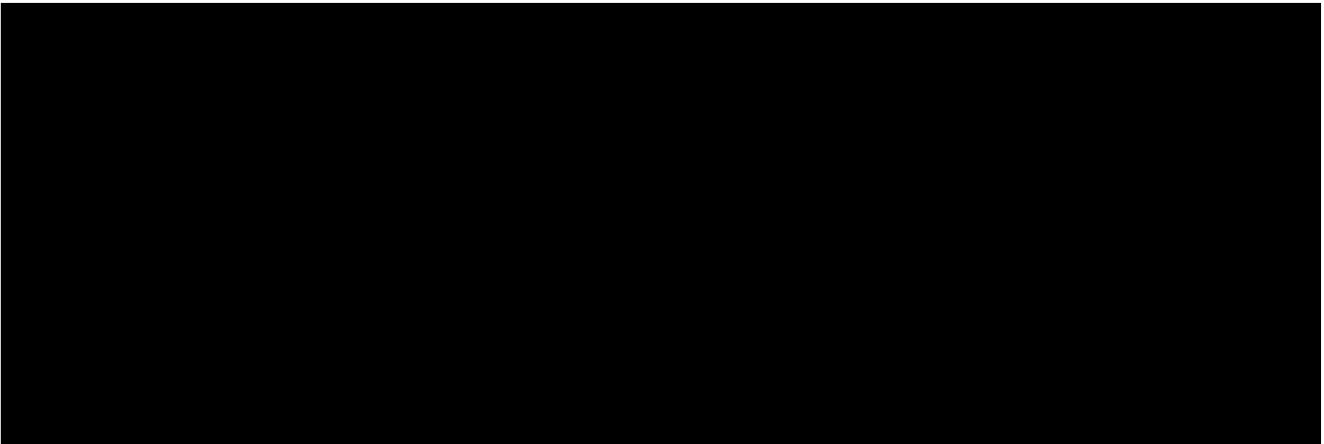
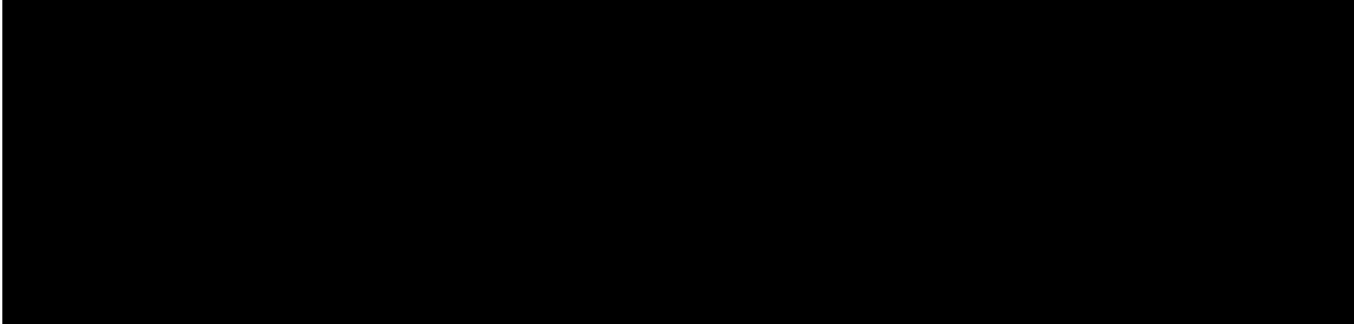
A: At the risk of destroying my friendship with a friend who destroys me on the tennis courts regularly, I have to say that any wiretaps in this country are out of my province. And if I knew, I wouldn't tell you the answers to those questions either.

Q: This questioner asks, could you please comment on the
(tape turned)

A: NATO, including Turkey and I think the long-term benefits
of this restoration of better relations between our countries
is very, very important to us as well as to Turkey and to NATO.
Turkey is that eastern anchor of the NATO Alliance and most stalwart
country in defense of freedom and a country in a geographical
location of tremendous importance.

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Q: In that connection, what is the justification of the general matter for _____ internal political _____ in other countries?

A: Now we are getting into the waters of covert political action as opposed to intelligence. Intelligence is the collecting of information and its evaluation. Covert political action is the

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effort to influence events in foreign countries without the influencer being known. Political action is not an intelligence activity but, since 1947 whenever this country has authorized political action, it has been assigned to the Central Intelligence Agency to carry out. I would say to you that, in my view, there is less need and usefulness for covert political action today than there was at times in the past. There's times when it has been very successful in behalf of our country. There are times like when you want to frustrate a terrorist group that it is useful to be able to infiltrate somebody into it and get them to influence the course of events in that group, where if they knew it was the United States doing that, it would be meaningless. It wouldn't be useful at all. And so, let's not kid ourselves. All of our diplomacy, all of our economic power and pressure, all of our military threat is here to influence other countries, to make sure they don't do things inimical to us. Covert political action is another tool in that quiver of arrows. As I say, it is less useful and applicable today, and particularly as I mentioned in my prepared remarks, because of the danger of exposure of it. But it is something that I sincerely believe we must retain the full panoply of potential for one does not know what 1985, 1990 may bring.

Q: _____ mention, do you anticipate a continuing shift to greater reliance upon electronic intelligence?

A: Yes and no. Over the past decade and a half, the capabilities of electronic and photographic reconnaissance techniques have

expanded remarkably. This is part of the great strength of our country in its marvelous technical expertise and its ability to translate that expertise into practical application. So today, we are almost surfeited with information derived from what we call the technical intelligence collection sources and they become more capable at all times. But when you look at this situation in its broad aspects, you must appreciate that as a generalization what you obtain from a photograph or signals intercept generally tells you about something that happened sometime in the past. And as soon as I tell this to a policymaker, he looks me in the eye and says, "Stan, why did it happen and what's going to happen next?" There is where the human intelligence activity comes in. It is the forte of the spy to design, find, to learn what other people's intentions, attitudes, plans, policies are. And so my view is yes, electronic intelligence is increasing because the technical capabilities are continuing to increase. But no, it is not relatively more important because as you gain more technical information you must have more human information to complement it. And, therefore, our emphasis is to have a balanced approach in this. And within the last year I have requested and the President has directed the establishment under [REDACTED] who was introduced to you here, something called a National Intelligence Tasking Center. And by that I mean tasking technical intelligence, human intelligence and making it work as a team. That is what is different today. We have increased emphasis on the importance of bringing together in teamwork all of the collection elements be they technical or human.

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Q: Usually we get a question that's based on something I haven't heard _____. The questioner would like to know whether there is any truth to the report that Soviet leader Brezhnev died in January and a look-alike was substituted.

A: If he has, he's fooled me.

Q: This questioner would like to know whether the CIA is looking for the violations of the arms embargo to South Africa and, if so, whether it has found any.

A: Surely it is our responsibility to understand the military posture of countries around the world that are of concern to us and that would include trying to understand what South Africa's capability is to obtain and manufacture and handle weapons systems. But I am not in the business of policing the laws of this country and determining if firm X or Y is avoiding a legal sanction against sending arms to South Africa. That's over in the law enforcement department.

Q: This questioner would like to know how the Intelligence Community will be able to demonstrate to the American public and the Congress that it can reliably verify the provisions of the pending SALT II Treaty.

A: This is one of our great challenges in the months ahead that the Treaty is signed soon. And I'll be frank with you, I doubt that I will be able to make a persuasive explanation of the degree to which we can verify in the public form for the reasons we have been

succinct, clear statement of what those capabilities are, what they are not, to the Congress. And I would also like to give you this assurance that as the SALT negotiations have proceeded, each term, each proposal made by the Soviets or made by ourselves, has come to us in the Intelligence Community for scrutiny. And for each one I have gone back and said, "This is the potential for verification that we see with our intelligence sources, this is how we think that capability may increase or decrease over the years ahead and, therefore, in a sense this is the risk you are taking if you accept this provision--here are some suggestions for how you might write that differently that would help us better verify it." So I can assure you I am convinced that those who make the decisions on what we should offer and what we should accept are well possessed of the information that I have in its greatest detail about how well we could verify those provisions.

Q: An Equal Opportunity question. The questioner would like to know are there many female citizens in the United States acting as spys and would you recommend spying as a good profession for a woman.

A: Definitely. In fact, I must admit to the ladies that we have been remiss in the Central Intelligence Agency in getting enough women into the clandestine side of our business and, therefore, there is greater opportunity for them proportionately than for a male because we are anxious to redress that shortcoming. There are

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a few instances in which being in the clandestine service as a lady is not satisfactory. There are some countries where you just can't walk out on the street as a lady and not be noticed as being unusual because of their culture and their society. But there are, in my opinion, as many other instances in which a lady might be even preferable to a man in doing the kind of clandestine work that we have to do. And so, the opportunities are there, we are stressing it in our recruiting, we are getting wonderful applicants from young ladies in our country, and we're just anxious for any more. If whoever wrote the question will send me an address, we'll get you a recruiter out there right away.

Q: In this question the questioner refers to President Carter's austerity program announced yesterday about reduction of federal employees; wants to know whether this will affect your operating capacity and will we get a subpar intelligence program because of this and do you propose to request relief from President Carter's edict.

A: I don't believe that at this time it will but I must confess to you that we have to wait and get the interpretations, the exact rulings from the Office of Management and Budget in particular as to how the President's directive is to be carried out. But at this point, in the clandestine service we have just been talking about, we are overstrength to where we expect to be at the end of this fiscal year. You recall that with some controversy a year ago next week I ordered 820 position reduction in our clandestine service.

here as the employment levels go down, it won't hurt us. Let me explain to you too, in connection with the previous question about the balance between electronic and human intelligence collection, that this 820 reduction was, by no means, intended to reflect a change of emphasis. It was simply a recognition of a very long standing fact that we were overstaffed and that, to me, was very inimical to the long-term interest of our country and of the Central Intelligence Agency. We have outstanding young people who have come in even during the intensity of criticism of the CIA; and if I'm going to challenge them and inspire them to stay in this organization and be the backbone of it in 10, 15, 20 years, we must challenge them today with a full and meaningful job. And if we are overstaffed and they are underutilized and oversupervised, we'll never make it.

Q: We have several questions on the Freedom of Information Act. How does it affect the operations of the CIA? Do you see any prospects of repealing the Freedom of Information Act and would you like to?

A: No I would not like to. I think the Freedom of Information Act has provided a very valuable service to our country. It consumes, however, over a hundred man-years of Central Intelligence employee time and much, much of that is wasted. We have so few requests that we can fulfill with respect to the number that come in because of the classification point of view, that we spin our wheels having to be conscientious and review document after document and turning them

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down. We hope there will be some relief in the Congress from the procedures which are required here. We have Jack Blake, our Deputy Director for Administration, sitting down here. Jack, how many man-years did we consume with just fulfilling Mr. Agee's requests alone? We've consumed nine man-years just responding to one American citizen's request--one person. Every time we issue anything or we have anything appear in the press, we get requests from certain organizations in this town, one after the other. We have to go through these in infinite detail. It just is an unreasonable situation that costs to the taxpayer today and I think it can be mitigated by some modification. But I think the basic principle of giving the public access to things that need not be classified is a very good one.

